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ABSTRACT

Artist/teachers are professional artists in various fields who teach in high schools for the visual and performing arts. Although many hold advanced degrees, few have taken courses in teaching methods. Nevertheless, as a group artist/teachers have a reputation for teaching excellence. Participants in this study of the psychological characteristics of artist/teachers were 202 teachers who responded to questionnaires regarding their personality characteristics and their teaching beliefs and practices. A profile of the artist/teachers in this sample them to be creative, confident about their abilities as teachers, highly intuitive, judgmental, evenly introverted and extroverted, and somewhat less internally directed than expected. With the exception of the last item, these would seem to be the ideal characteristics for teachers of artistically talented students. (JD)

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Psychological Characteristics, Teaching Beliefs and Teaching Behaviors of Artist/Teachers

A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of NETWORK, an organization of schools for the Visual and Performing Arts, October, 1989, Washington, DC

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Psychological Characteristics, Teaching Beliefs and Teaching Behaviors of Artist/Teachers

Artist/teachers are professional artists in various fields[1] who teach in high schools for the visual and performing arts. They are hired as teachers because of experience, "excellence and professional standing [in the arts]" (Carpenter, 1987, p. 32) rather than pedagogical training. Although many artist/teachers hold advanced degrees, few have taken courses in teaching methods. Yet, some have won teacher of the year awards competing against seasoned educators in other disciplines[2] and, as a group, artist/teachers have a reputation for teaching excellence (Gear, 1984).

Lack of research about artist/teachers

Very little is known about artists/teachers. In fact, "there is a total lack of a body of research about teachers for students with superior abilities in the arts" (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984, p. 89).

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[1] Artist/teachers are professionals in such disciplines as dance, music, theatre, creative writing and visual arts.

[2] Tom Whalen, creative writing instructor, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, chosen as high school teacher of the year, New Orleans Public Schools, 1984. Lorraine Alfaro, vocal music instructor, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, chosen high school teacher of the year, New Orleans Public Schools, 1987.

One reason for this lack of information is that, unlike certain periods in ancient Greece, modern society regards artistic pursuits as somewhat avocational rather than professional (Gear, 1984; Jaeger, 1939). Consequently, instruction in the arts usually takes a subservient role to instruction in other disciplines (Clark & Zimmerman, 1987). Compared to other educators, artist /teachers represent a small pool of teachers who work with a select group of students isolated from the mainstream of education.

An ongoing and unresolved problem also exists with research which investigates teacher characteristics (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984). Most studies fail to discriminate between attributes of good teachers, teachers best suited for teaching gifted/talented students and teachers best suited for teaching artistically talented students (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984; The advocate survey, 1971). A few lists of desired artist/teacher characteristics such as pleasing personality, patience and knowledge of subject matter have been offered. But, these lists are vague, purely speculative and based more upon intuition than research (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984). Research which deals specifically with "ideal teacher characteristics for artistically talented students is missing . . except as it can be inferred" (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984, p. 90).

Artist/teachers may be different

Although there is no definitive information, there is a commonly-held opinion that artist/teachers possess certain distinct qualities which, in some way, makes them different , and thus, more able to meet the instructional needs of artistically talented students (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984). Artist/teachers also refer to themselves as "being different" (Laciura, 1989). Yet, this perceived difference has never been identified.

Obviously, artist/teachers are very knowledgeable about their art form (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984). Most artist/teachers have made a living in the arts outside of academia and they can share their experiences with their students. They know "what the world is like out there because they have been there" (Gear, 1984, p. 223). But, knowledge of subject matter and experience are prerequisites for all effective teaching. Perhaps artist/teachers are different because they are creative individuals with correspondingly unique personality attributes (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984). Extensive research on creativity indicates that creative individuals "display qualities of personality that distinguish them from the less creative" (Gilchrist, 1972, p. 64).

Artist/teachers and creativity

There is no doubt that artist/teachers are creative human beings. They are successful musicians, visual artists, writers, dancers and actors. People who create or perform "are regarded as more creative than the average" (Gilchrist, 1972, p. 11). Their art form is an expression of their inner state, "needs, perceptions [and] motivations" (Mackinnon, 1981, p. 113). The work they do as artists fits an accepted definition of artistic creativity. It is novel or original, accomplishes a recognizable goal, and results in a fully developed product (Mackinnon, 1981). "In this type of creativeness, the creator externalizes something of himself into the public field" (Mackinnon, 1981, p. 113).

The creative personality

Four decades of research on the creative personality indicate that there are a number of personality traits associated with creative people (McAleer, 1989). Personality refers to a unique pattern of traits or attributes which determine how individuals interpret and deal with life, what they consider important, and how they make decisions (Lawrence, 1986). Aspects of personality affect individuals' cognitive functioning such as thinking, styles of information gathering, conceptualizing, perceiving, understanding, and modes of decision making (Jung, 1971;

Kiersey & Bates, 1978; Lytton, 1972). Personality characteristics also influence individuals' affective dimensions, such as beliefs, "wants, motives, purposes, aims, values, needs, driven impulses [and] urges" (Kiersey & Bates, 1978, p. 2). Furthermore, the conscious, rational portion of personality influences individuals' interpersonal behaviors (Gough, 1987). Qualities of empathy, open-mindedness, responsibility, leadership, flexibility and conscientiousness, all indicative of ego strength, relate to personality characteristics (Gough, 1987; Lytton, 1972).

Salient personality traits associated with creative people include independence, not yielding to the majority of opinion, sensitivity, preference for complexity, non-conformity in thinking and possessing an internal locus of evaluation (i.e., concern with self-evaluation of work).

Creative individuals also like to discover and investigate. They have an "ability to sense deficiencies, elaborate and redefine" (Torrance, 1974, p. 9). They actively look for problems to solve, but they are usually not interested in small details (Mackinnon, 1981). They are courageous in convictions, self-confident, self-centered, determined, unconventional, have a sense of destiny or a belief in their self-worth and ultimate attainments, become preoccupied with tasks, are truthful, speak frankly and critically even when it hurts, are self-assertive, self-starting, and

self-sufficient (Guilford, 1959; Lytton, 1972; Mackinnon, 1981; Torrance, 1974).

In Freudian terminology, creative individuals are governed by "less rigid superego standards" (Gilchrist, 1972, p. 68). This allows them to be unconcerned with the standards, expectations and opinions of others and therefore they are not dependent on social approval (Amabile, 1983; Lytton, 1972). In fact, "conformity to social pressure is negatively related to creativity" (Amabile, 1983, p. 74). Like young children, creative persons are also open to experiences and have a capacity for whimsicalness (Fitzgerald, 1966; Taft, 1969) and "imaginative encounters with the environment" (Gilchrist, 1972, p. 68). Creative individuals are verbally skillful, psychologically minded (e.g., interested in analyzing human behavior in terms of their motives and feelings), intellectually curious, enjoy work for work itself, have a high tolerance for ambiguity and are more aware of potential that might go unnoticed (Mackinnon, 1981; Torrance, 1974; Weisberg & Springer, 1961). They are emotionally sensitive to problems and disharmonies, but they are not interested in curbing their own or others' impulses (Dauw, 1965; Mackinnon, 1981; May, 1975). In fact, they prefer to express rather than suppress their anxieties. They have a good self-image and the capacity and initiative to

break away from the usual sequence of thought. They like to fantasize, take risks, make guesses, and search for solutions (Guilford, 1959, Torrance, 1974).

"In the realm of sexual identification and interest [creative individuals] appear to give more expression to the feminine side of their nature than do less creative persons" (Mackinnon, 1981, p. 117). They are not afraid to recognize feelings, emotions and interests which are considered feminine in American culture (Mackinnon, 1981).

Creative individuals are also achievement oriented (Dauw, 1965, Simpson, 1922). They are willing to work hard for long periods of time (Guilford, 1959). Achievement needs have been linked to personal beliefs that one's actions generally determine whether one attains success or failure (i.e., an internal locus of control) (Rotter, 1966). Persons with a high internal locus of control generally believe that what they do and how they act determines their achievements. Therefore their behavior is usually goal-directed and internally regulated (Rotter, 1966).

Creative persons describe themselves as capable, clever, confident, egotistical, humorous, individualistic, informal, inciteful, intelligent, inventive, original, reflective, resourceful, self-starting, snobbish and unconventional (Gough, 1979, Torrance & Khatena, 1970).

Jungian personality typology

Jungian personality typology, which provides a practical way for examining individual styles of information gathering and decision-making, indicates that most creative people are primarily highly intuitive, usually highly perceptive and, to a large extent, introverted, although extraverts and introverts are evenly divided among individuals who are performers (Cropley, 1965; Erickson, Gant & Stephenson, 1970; Gough, 1976, 1981; Gryskiewicz, 1982; Mackinnon, 1960, 1962a, 1981; Myers & McCaulley, 1986; Owen, 1962; Stephens, 1975; Whittemore & Helmann, 1965).

"Intuition ... appears to be vital to the creative thinking process" (McAleer, 1989, p. 44). Studies show that the more creative a person is the more he or she will "express a stronger preference for intuition" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 214). Intuitive individuals, estimated to represent only twenty-five per cent of the general population, possess an openness to experiences. They look "expectantly for a bridge or link between that which is given and present and that which is not yet thought of, focusing only habitually upon possibilities" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 119). Intuitive individuals trust their insights and this trust in their intuitive abilities makes them "independent and individualistic" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 28). They may become so preoccupied with pursuing

possibilities that they overlook facts and limitations and underestimate the time required to complete a particular task. They dislike doing the same thing repeatedly and enjoy learning a new skill more than using it (Gilchrist, 1972; MacKinnon, 1981; Myers & McCaulley, 1986).

Intuitive individuals are imaginative, theoretical, abstract and future-oriented. They prefer academic interests, music and music education, foreign languages, art and art education and psychology. They are liberal, self-actualizing and like to work where they can use ideas and theories and create something new (Myers & McCaulley, 1986).

Self-descriptive adjectives of intuitives include adaptable, wide-interests, complicated, farsighted, idealistic, intelligent, outspoken, reflective, sexy, flirtatious, talkative, trusting, unconventional, original, artistic, ingenious, complicated, curious, rebellious, non-conforming, associates ideas in unusual ways and genuinely values intellectual and cognitive matters (Myers & McCaulley, 1986). In contrast to intuitively oriented persons, sensate individuals prefer to use their five senses in order to reach conclusions about their environment.

Perceptive individuals are very aware of incoming information. For intuitive/perceptive individuals the incoming information is usually concerned with the possibilities of what may be rather than the reality of

what is. They are "open to experience both from within and without and [are] characterized by flexibility, and spontaneity" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 118). They do not place judgment on people but try to understand them. They may procrastinate and have difficulty with decision-making if they have a deficit of judgment (Myers & McCaulley, 1986). They prefer a spontaneous way of life rather than a planned, orderly one and may postpone unpleasant jobs and "consider even modest structure unduly restricting" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 70). Perceptive individuals prefer occupations such as art, photography, architecture, music, foreign languages and the humanities.

Self-descriptive adjectives of perceptives include disorderly, careless, adventurous, pleasure-seeking, lazy, changeable, restless, rebellious, unpredictable and self-indulgent (Myers & McCaulley, 1986).

In contrast to persons typified as perceptive, individuals with a judging orientation prefer order and work that "imposes a system" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 78). Judging types like to plan and organize activities. In fact, they are characterized by their decisiveness, preference for organization and closure. They may decide things too quickly, tend to be satisfied once they reach a decision and like to get things settled. For judging types an orderly approach is essential (Myers & McCaulley, 1986).

Self-descriptions of judging persons include effective, efficient, decisive, systematic, conscientious, persevering, orderly and purposeful.

Introverted persons are in the minority within the general population. They like quiet for concentration, tend to be careful with details and do not mind working on one project for long periods of time. They work contentedly alone and need sufficient time alone. They dislike telephone intrusions and interruptions and they like to think a great deal before they act. Introverts prefer occupations that require sustained attention and are interested in concepts and ideas.

Self-descriptive adjectives of introverts include quiet, reserved, shy, defensive, aloof, introspective, methodical and calm (Myers & McCaulley, 1986).

In contrast extraverts prefer to deal in the world of people. They achieve their best ideas when talking with others. Therefore, they rely "on the evironment for stimulation and guidance" (Myers & McCaulley, 1986, p. 13). They are easy communicators and are occasionally impulsive in their ways of dealing with life events. They do not mind interruptions and get bored with long, slow tasks.

Self-descriptive adjectives of extraverts include friendly, gregarious, impulsive, adaptable, poised, warm, expressive, outgoing, optimistic,

rapid personal tempo, adventurous, headstrong, sharp witted and facially and gesturally expressive (Myers & McCaulley, 1986).

Methodology

Two hundred and fifty artist/teachers in fourteen high schools for the visual and performing arts located in urban cities throughout the United States were asked to participate in the study. One hundred and two artist/teachers responded. Returns equaled 40%, which is considered a typical response rate (Kerlinger, 1973). Twenty one protocols were discarded because of incomplete responses.

The subjects completed a, 1) researcher-devised questionnaire which elicited their opinions regarding their personality characteristics and their teaching beliefs and practices (See Appendix A), 2) Rotter's Generalized Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement (1966) and, 3) the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Form F (1976) (See Appendix B for a description of these two instruments). These data sources provided a total number of two hundred and forty four different measurements for each subject.

A varimax rotation factor analysis was selected as the most appropriate technique for analyzing the data from the researcher-devised questionnaire. Eight factors were extracted which were identified as

measuring the subjects' perceptions regarding their self-confidence, behaviors as teachers, intensity and obsessiveness, concerns about school policies and procedures, independence, abilities as teachers, abilities to relate to students and responsibleness. Data from the Generalized Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement (Rotter, 1966) were analyzed by descriptive statistics. Data from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (1976) were categorized according to Jung's descriptions of basic personality types (introvert/extrovert, sensing/intuitive, thinking/feeling and judging/perceiving).

Results

The results of the data analyses indicate that artist/teachers believe that there is somewhat of a causal relationship between their behavior and their success and achievements. They are fairly, though not considerably, internally directed.

Artist/teachers possess many of the personality characteristics associated with highly creative individuals with examples of the sixteen basic personality types scattered among the five disciplines of theatre, music, visual arts, dance and writing. They have a good self-image, believe they are more intelligent than most individuals, are self-confident, have wide interests, a good sense of humor and do not suppress

their uniqueness. They are intense, independent, decisive, energetic, flexible and have a strong sense of self-worth. They are outspoken, stand up for what they believe is right and believe that individuality is sacred. They are also absorbed in their art form, however, unlike most creative individuals described in the literature, their art form is not their entire way of life and many did not recognize their artistic giftedness until early adulthood.

As instructors, artist/teachers make their own decisions regarding instruction, curriculum and evaluation of students and are confident about their effectiveness as teachers. They choose their own texts and hand-outs, are well organized and patient with students, love to teach and consider themselves to be natural-born teachers and mentors to their students. They reflect about teaching mainly by making mental notes rather than written notes, share the truth about their particular arts profession with their students, believe in the importance of the teaching process but also believe that their students should display their work. They occasionally raise their voices during instruction and do not like to be interrupted while teaching. They believe that they know what is best for their students, expect students to accept responsibility and have high expectations for their students' futures. They believe that not every

artist can become a good teacher, consider themselves to be experts in their field and are somewhat though not overly interested in influencing school policies. Before making instructional decisions they rarely consult with their school administrator, believe that administrators of schools for the visual and performing arts need to be special persons who have an understanding and appreciation of the arts and would work to remove an incompetent administrator.

According to Jungian personality typology, artist/teachers, like the majority of creative individuals described in the literature, are highly intuitive. Extraverts and introverts are evenly distributed throughout the population. Unlike the majority of creative persons described in the literature however, artist/teachers prefer to deal with the outer world by using judging processes rather than perceiving processes. Individuals with a judging orientation prefer order, tend to be conscientious and reliable and seek closure to all life's events.

Discussion

It is not surprising that artist/teachers possess most of the personality characteristics associated with creative persons. Unlike most creative individuals described in the literature however, these artist/teachers do not prefer a peceptive orientation toward the world, but rather hold a

judging orientation. This particular personality characteristc may be what inherently makes these artist/teachers different from other artists. The judging orientation dictates a more orderly and reliable or secure lifestyle. The orgainization and structure of teaching provides this order, as opposed to the life of a professional artist who may not know from one week to the next if employment opportunities will be available. Artist/teachers, on the other hand, can work with their art form in a secure and orderly environment. In this way they meet their psychological needs both for creating and for order.

The assumption that artist/teachers are "different" is a valid assumption. Artist/teachers are different from the majority of all people in that they are highly intuitive, and therefore different from 75% of the population. Thus, artist/teachers as a group are individualistic, ingenious, zestful, enthusiastic, and sense possibilities.

The results of this study also reveal that these artist/teachers are somewhat less internally directed than might be expected. While their creative nature dictates that they are independent and decisive with a strong sense of self-worth, perhaps circumstances have dictated that these artist/teachers perceive themselves as having less control over their environment and achievements than they would like. Administrators

of schools employing artist/teachers must provide opportunities for these teacher to exercise more control. They must be empowered, that is, their ideas for school policies and procedures sought out, listened to, accepted and implemented. Study results indicate that administrators can trust these artist/teachers to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum and their students.

Further research needs to be done that examines the similarities and differences between effective artist/teachers and effective teachers. If there are similarities in psychological characteristics, (e.g., intuitiveness), then teacher educators and school administrators could provide learning experiences and opportunities that would enhance these characteristics. Further research also needs to examine administrators of schools for the visual and performing arts in terms of their personality traits and administrative beliefs and behaviors.

In summary, a profile of the artist/teachers in this sample is: creative, confident about their abilities as teachers, highly intuitive, use judging processes, evenly introverted and extroverted, and somewhat less internally directed than expected. With the exception of the last item, these would seem to be ideal characteristics for teachers of artistically talented students.

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APPENDIX A

Representative Items for the Eight Factors Identified on the Researcher-Devised Questionnaire

#1. I set my own standards for judging students.

#6. I am very patient with my students.

#7. I am a natural-born teacher.

#16. I have a good sense of humor.

#29. I believe individuality is sacred.

#30. I have a lot of self-confidence in my teaching ability.

#39. My art form is my life.

#55. It is important that students display their work.

APPENDIX B

Instruments

Generalized Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement (Rotter, 1966) measures the construct of locus of control. Locus of control indicates individuals' beliefs about "the relationship between one's own behavior and its consequences" (Rotter, 1966, p.2). Persons with a high internal locus of control score generally believe that they are able to make decisions which affect outcomes. Conversely, persons with a high external locus of control score generally believe that outside forces such as fate, luck or chance determine outcomes.

This instrument consists of 29 forced-choice items. Rotter (1966) reports moderate to good reliability and validity coefficients ranging from .49 to .83.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Form F, (Briggs & Myers, 1976) measures 4 personality factors based upon the dichotomies of extrovert/introvert, sensing/intuitive, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving. The theoretical foundation of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is Jung's (1971) theory of type. This instrument provides information about individuals' styles of information gathering and decision-making (i.e., how persons become aware of things, people,

happenings, and ideas, and all of the ways persons come to conclusions about what has been perceived).

The Ninth Mental Measurements Yearbook (Mitchell, 1985) reports that validity is moderate based upon statistically significant correlations with similar tests, and that reliability is good based on correlation coefficients of .87.